

What to Avoid in Buying a Watch

GET A STANDARD MAKE
IN A STANDARD STORE.

Otherwise You May Buy a "Waldron" for a Waltham, a "Hamerton" for a Hamilton, Glass Instead of Jewels or an Old Movement on Which the 20-Year Guarantee Has Expired—Some Explicit Rules Worth Following.

By SAMUEL HOPKINS ADAMS.

John Smith wants a watch. Being, like most of us, human enough to have a touch of vanity in his make-up, he wants a slightly and prosperously appearing watch. Gold is in his mind's eye; a gold watch of a reliable movement, properly jeweled. But John himself is none too prosperous. The money saved for the watch represents no small self-denial and abstinence from other desirable purchases. Therefore he wants the very best value for his money. Now, John would never consider going to one of the fashionable Fifth Avenue jewelry shops, to a high-class department store, or even to one of the small, honest "neighborhood" type of jewelry shops. These he would believe quite out of his range of price. Here he would make his fatal error, for at any of these places he would get an honest deal, know exactly what he was buying, and have a sound guarantee back of his purchase. But the superstition of the watch "bargain" is in his mind. So he will go further and fare worse, and we will follow him on this search of his for fairy gold; a fictitious search for the purposes of this article, but one which has been paralleled in every particular by the experiences of The Tribune investigators.

Exploring, with an alert regard, the field of East Twenty-third Street, John Smith is caught and held, as with a glittering eye, by this sign in the window of the Mathews Jewelry Co., at No. 52:

SEVEN JEWEL WALTHAM AND ELGIN
GOLD FILLED WATCHES.
\$4.95. VALUE \$10.00.
GUARANTEED 20 YEARS.

The names of the bargain watches are familiar to him as those of standard makes. He goes in and asks to see a Waltham watch. The obliging saleswoman produces a genuine (but very old) Waltham, and while the customer is looking it over she deftly switches his attention to a Waldron watch. Now Waltham and Waldron are not quite nearly enough alike to involve conflict with the trademark laws, but they have sufficient resemblance when spoken trippingly on the tongue to fool the unwary. Let us give the saleswoman the benefit of the doubt and concede that she did not use the term "Waltham" precisely, but—

"Here's a nice Waltham watch," says she.
Smith's attention is readily diverted from the first article shown. To his unpracticed eye the substitute looks all right. "Will it wear well?" he asks.

"It's a twenty-year hunting case," she assures him. "Look. Here's the guarantee."
Sure enough, there is the legend, "Warranted twenty years," but it is stamped on the inner face of the outside case, instead of on the inside cap where it should be, thus suggesting that the stamping was done, not by the manufacturer of the case (the Illinois Watch Case Company), but by the dealer or some other person. But, of course, John Smith can't know this. If he did he wouldn't be such an easy prey.

"Seven-jeweled movement, too," continues the clerk.
That helps catch John Smith. The mere sound of the word "jeweled" suggests a rich and superior article. Some doubt, however, lingers.

"If this gets out of order can I send it to the Waltham Company, and will they repair it?" he asks.

(This exact query was put to the saleswoman at the Mathews store, and the reply was identically as I give it below in the supposititious conversation with Smith.)

"You can either send it to them, or bring it to us and we'll fix it for you."

Believing that he is purchasing a seven-jeweled watch of standard make which will last him twenty years, Smith puts down his \$4.95. And this is what he gets for it:

The movement is an old one, manufactured by a defunct concern which has no more connection with the Waltham Company than it has with the Trans-Siberian Railroad; and apparently made on some cheap special order, as it is not regular in any of its parts. Its seven jewels which glittered so brightly to the imaginative eye of Smith dwindle down on examination to one lone sparkler—and that a glass one! The case is a five-year case, not a twenty-year case, and the "Warranted twenty years" is a plain falsity. Under the law the Illinois Watch Case Company becomes liable for the stamped statement, as the case is registered by them, although it would appear from the location of the legend that not they, but the jobber or dealer, may have stamped it upon the case. Three dollars and fifty cents would be a fair retail price for the very poor example of the watchmaker's art.

In the downtown store of Mathews, at 243 Broadway, our friend Smith would have done rather better. There, if he had tried to get an Elgin for \$5, represented as a fifteen-jewel movement with twenty-year case, he would actually have been sold an Elgin. But it would be the movement, and not the case, that was of the twenty-year variety; and this would be twenty years old, not twenty years young. It contains eleven, not fifteen, jewels. The case, branded "Alert," is worth about \$1.25 at wholesale. Any one guaranteeing it for twenty years would presumably do so on the basis of expecting to be out of reach when the twenty years was over. The watch is worth perhaps \$1.00.

Assume that Mr. Smith does his shopping further uptown and falls into the hands of our old friend Joseph Clair, of 1447 Broadway. (Oh, yes; Clair is still doing the same kind of fake trade which was recently described in The Tribune, at the same old stand.) This time Smith, having just found a job with a railroad, is after a somewhat higher class watch, for a railroad man's timekeeper must keep time, not approximate it. Clair's sunburst effect in show windows catches Smith's eye, and he enters to find himself met by the super-blond lady who some time since sold me the alarm clock.

"Railroad watch?" she repeats. "That's got to pass the inspection. You got to have a good watch to do that. It must have at least seventeen jewels."

"Well, I want a good watch, but I don't want to go too high."

"Something about \$35 or \$40?"

"Too much. I can't afford it."

"Well, here's one you can have for \$30."

"Haven't you got anything cheaper? I've just landed this job and I can't afford to go high."

Thereupon she shows him several watches, including a Swiss make which no American railroad would allow, and several others under the standard stamped, and he finally settles on an Elgin movement in a case stamped "20-year guarantee." No price tag appears on this article.

"How much?" inquires John Smith.

"Fifteen dollars, and a very good bargain at the price."

But the spirit of bargaining, inspired perhaps by the flagrant offers in the window, is now lively within Mr. Smith, and he demands to know whether the lady is joking, and how much she will actually take for it.

No; the lady is not joking. Playful she may be—and is—but never jocular on a question of price. "You can't buy that watch for \$14.95."

"I don't want to. Twelve dollars would be a big price. Is it a new watch?"

"Brand new. Guaranteed. Give me thirteen and a half for it."

"Twelve is my limit."

"My husband would kill me if he ever knew I let it go at that price. But, there," she sighs, "Give me the money and take it."

John Smith takes it. Whether or not he brings it back after finding

CUSTOMERS FIRST.

HEARN

Fourteenth Street West of Fifth Avenue

Great Offering of WAMSUTTA AND NEW BEDFORD SHEETS AND PILLOW CASES

at AUGUST SALE REDUCTIONS.

These are unusual times and unusual opportunities are coming our way.

This is just one instance (see our regular advts. for others) of how operating in large quantities for cash reduces the price.

NOTE THE LARGE ASSORTMENT OF EXTRA SIZE SHEETS AND PILLOW CASES.

PILLOW CASES—WAMSUTTA.	WORTH	SALE	NEW BEDFORD.	WORTH	SALE
42x36	26	20	21	20	20
42x38	28	22	23	22	22
42x40	30	24	25	24	24
42x42	32	26	27	26	26
42x44	34	28	29	28	28
42x46	36	30	31	30	30
42x48	38	32	33	32	32
42x50	40	34	35	34	34
42x52	42	36	37	36	36
42x54	44	38	39	38	38
42x56	46	40	41	40	40
42x58	48	42	43	42	42
42x60	50	44	45	44	44
42x62	52	46	47	46	46
42x64	54	48	49	48	48
42x66	56	50	51	50	50
42x68	58	52	53	52	52
42x70	60	54	55	54	54
42x72	62	56	57	56	56
42x74	64	58	59	58	58
42x76	66	60	61	60	60
42x78	68	62	63	62	62
42x80	70	64	65	64	64
42x82	72	66	67	66	66
42x84	74	68	69	68	68
42x86	76	70	71	70	70
42x88	78	72	73	72	72
42x90	80	74	75	74	74
42x92	82	76	77	76	76
42x94	84	78	79	78	78
42x96	86	80	81	80	80
42x98	88	82	83	82	82
42x100	90	84	85	84	84
42x102	92	86	87	86	86
42x104	94	88	89	88	88
42x106	96	90	91	90	90
42x108	98	92	93	92	92
42x110	100	94	95	94	94
42x112	102	96	97	96	96
42x114	104	98	99	98	98
42x116	106	100	101	100	100
42x118	108	102	103	102	102
42x120	110	104	105	104	104
42x122	112	106	107	106	106
42x124	114	108	109	108	108
42x126	116	110	111	110	110
42x128	118	112	113	112	112
42x130	120	114	115	114	114
42x132	122	116	117	116	116
42x134	124	118	119	118	118
42x136	126	120	121	120	120
42x138	128	122	123	122	122
42x140	130	124	125	124	124
42x142	132	126	127	126	126
42x144	134	128	129	128	128
42x146	136	130	131	130	130
42x148	138	132	133	132	132
42x150	140	134	135	134	134
42x152	142	136	137	136	136
42x154	144	138	139	138	138
42x156	146	140	141	140	140
42x158	148	142	143	142	142
42x160	150	144	145	144	144
42x162	152	146	147	146	146
42x164	154	148	149	148	148
42x166	156	150	151	150	150
42x168	158	152	153	152	152
42x170	160	154	155	154	154
42x172	162	156	157	156	156
42x174	164	158	159	158	158
42x176	166	160	161	160	160
42x178	168	162	163	162	162
42x180	170	164	165	164	164
42x182	172	166	167	166	166
42x184	174	168	169	168	168
42x186	176	170	171	170	170
42x188	178	172	173	172	172
42x190	180	174	175	174	174
42x192	182	176	177	176	176
42x194	184	178	179	178	178
42x196	186	180	181	180	180
42x198	188	182	183	182	182
42x200	190	184	185	184	184
42x202	192	186	187	186	186
42x204	194	188	189	188	188
42x206	196	190	191	190	190
42x208	198	192	193	192	192
42x210	200	194	195	194	194
42x212	202	196	197	196	196
42x214	204	198	199	198	198
42x216	206	200	201	200	200
42x218	208	202	203	202	202
42x220	210	204	205	204	204
42x222	212	206	207	206	206
42x224	214	208	209	208	208
42x226	216	210	211	210	210
42x228	218	212	213	212	212
42x230	220	214	215	214	214
42x232	222	216	217	216	216
42x234	224	218	219	218	218
42x236	226	220	221	220	220
42x238	228	222	223	222	222
42x240	230	224	225	224	224
42x242	232	226	227	226	226
42x244	234	228	229	228	228
42x246	236	230	231	230	230
42x248	238	232	233	232	232
42x250	240	234	235	234	234
42x252	242	236	237	236	236
42x254	244	238	239	238	238
42x256	246	240	241	240	240
42x258	248	242	243	242	242
42x260	250	244	245	244	244
42x262	252	246	247	246	246
42x264	254	248	249	248	248
42x266	256	250	251	250	250
42x268	258	252	253	252	252
42x270	260	254	255	254	254
42x272	262	256	257	256	256
42x274	264	258	259	258	258
42x276	266	260	261	260	260
42x278	268	262	263	262	262
42x280	270	264	265	264	264
42x282	272	266	267	266	266
42x284	274	268	269	268	268
42x286	276	270	271	270	270
42x288	278	272	273	272	272
42x290	280	274	275	274	274
42x292	282	276	277	276	276
42x294	284	278	279	278	278
42x296	286	280	281	280	280
42x298	288	282	283	282	282
42x300	290	284	285	284	284
42x302	292	286	287	286	286
42x304	294	288	289	288	288
42x306	296	290	291	290	290
42x308	298	292	293	292	292
42x310	300	294	295	294	294
42x312	302	296	297	296	296
42x314	304	298	299	298	298
42x316	306	300	301	300	300
42x318	308	302	303	302	302
42x320	310	304	305	304	304
42x322	312	306	307	306	306
42x324	314	308	309	308	308
42x326	316	310	311	310	310
42x328	318	312	313	312	312
42x330	320	314	315	314	314
42x332	322	316	317	316	316
42x334	324	318	319	318	318
42x336	326	320	321	320	320
42x338	328	322	323	322	322
42x340	330	324	325	324	324
42x342	332	326	327	326	326
42x344	334	328	329	328	328
42x346	336	330	331	330	330
42x348	338	332	333	332	332
42x350	340	334	335	334	334
42x352	342	336	337	336	336
42x354	344	338	339	338	338
42x356	346	340	341	340	34